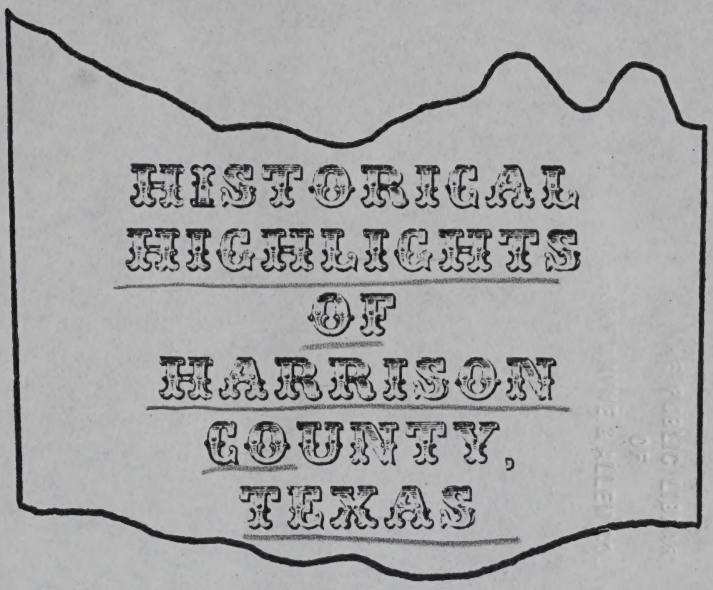
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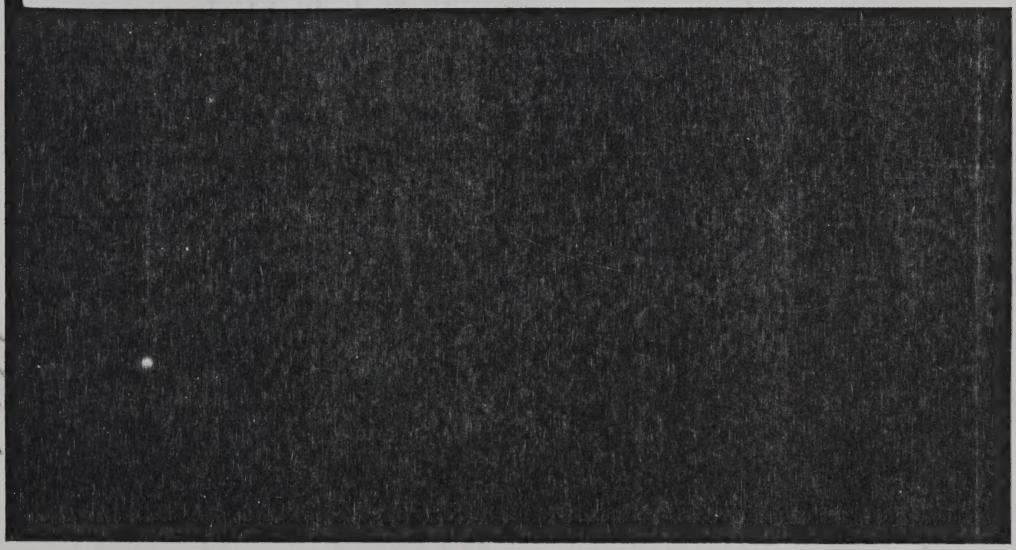
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Marshall National Bank
Historical highlights of
Harrison County, Texas

Dallas

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Marshall National Bank
Historical highlights of
Harrison County, Texas
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This booklet, "Historical Highlights of Harrison County," is prepared in recognition of the 70th Anniversary of The Marshall National Bank.

Time carries away with it the memories of the rich history and the pioneer days of Marshall and this area. It is hoped that this booklet will be a means of holding intact a small segment of these memories and of calling attention to the great foundation strength laid in the beginning.

It is dedicated with affection and appreciation to the people of Harrison County, and it is presented as a treasure of historical information to future generations.

We acknowledge with appreciation, the contributions of Millard Cope, the staff of the Marshall News Messenger, and many others for the historical information contained in this booklet.

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THE MARSHALL NATIONAL BANK

On September 30, 1889, in the little town of Marshall, Texas, The Marshall National Bank opened its doors. This bank, founded by a group of thirty-eight outstanding men with a vision of the future Marshall, was destined to become one of the strongest banking institutions in East Texas.

The Marshall which the new bank faced was experiencing its first real growth since the flag of the Confederacy had been lowered twenty-four years before. From the grinding reconstruction of the seventies, through a financial panic and a devastating epidemic of yellow fever, Marshall had stood firm until the eighties brought the first surge of optimism.

By 1889 business in Marshall was good. Trains were arriving daily bringing clothing, groceries, hardware and household goods to the Harrison County families and on the crowded streets there was talk about the new bank.

Marshall grew and the new bank grew. Times were changing, antiquated buildings were being torn down and replaced by modern stores, factories were moving in and Marshall was feeling growing pains. To meet the needs of this growing community The Marshall National Bank announced in 1910 its intention to build a new bank building.

Then came World War I, the booming 20's and the crash of the market in 1929. From then on were the dark days of the depression. Bank after bank was failing. Through this, The Marshall National Bank continued its confidence in the future by maintaining an unbroken record of semi-annual dividends.

As the country moved out of the depression era, The Marshall National Bank moved forward with the Community announcing a remodeling of the bank to be completed in time for its 50th Anniversary in 1939.

Growth and progress continued, and then the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. With the war's end, Marshall returned to its normal pattern of life. By 1949 office space in Marshall was at a premium. The Marshall National Bank, alert to the community's need, announced that three additional floors of office space were to be added to the bank building and at the same time the bank's interior was to be remodeled.

The Korean conflict flared and was over. By 1957 it was obvious that Marshall's continuing growth must be met by a growth in the bank's services, and so the directors and officers decided to build the most modern motor bank possible. On February 7, 1958, Harrison County's first walk-in and drive-in banking facility was introduced to the public.

The pattern of economic growth continued its steady upward pace and it was with the beginning of 1959 that the Marshall National Bank determined to increase its capital structure through stock dividends. By April the capital stock had been raised to $400,000.00 as compared with $66,838.07 paid in on its first day in 1889.

It is because of the confidence and support of business firms and individuals that The Marshall National Bank now has total assets of over $13,000,000.00. It is because of this support that The Marshall National Bank enjoys a unique record of seventy years of unbroken semi-annual dividend payments to its shareholders and it is because of this confidence and support that The Marshall National Bank looks toward the future with a firm determination to better serve Harrison County.

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HARRISON COUNTY

The area now known as Harrison County was probably seen by white men for the first time in 1543. In that year a group of Spaniards, after the death of DeSoto, attempted a land journey from Arkansas to Mexico. This group probably passed through the forested, Indian-inhabited area which later became Harrison County.

It is known that about 300 Spanish troops passed through this section in 1679 on their way northward to block French troops. Because they could find no way to cross Caddo Lake, they settled for a time on its shores, founding the town of Port Caddo, which eventually died because of its extreme location inland.

White settlers came to the area in the early 1830's. John Beaty and his wife were sheltered by a man named Amaryllis until Beaty built his own log cabin. In this same log cabin Sara Amaryllis Beaty was born, the first white child in Harrison County.

In the early days of the Republic of Texas, larger counties were divided in order to reduce distances to the county seat towns. Harrison county was created from a division of Shelby County on January 28, 1839, and named for Jonas Harrison, a colorful character and brilliant attorney who at one time sought to lose his identity in the frontier country.

Originally taking in most of the present-day Panola and parts of Upshur and Marion counties, Harrison was a vast expanse of 1,500 square miles. Its area today is 872 square miles.

The first location selected for a county seat was Greensborough, twelve miles south of Marshall on the Sabine River. When this location proved untenable because of mosquitoes and swamp fever, a new location at Paluski was tried. This site, 23 miles southeast of present-day Marshall on the east bank of the Sabine River likewise proved unsatisfactory, and in 1842 an election was called to select a new seat of justice.

Peter Whetstone had the high, dry land needed and the commissioners accepted his offer, making Marshall the county seat.

The peaceful progress of Harrison County was interrupted when the Regulator-Moderator spread into the area, but conditions improved after peace was restored in 1844. By 1861 stage coach and ox freight lines connected Marshall with Jefferson, Daingerfield, Mt. Pleasant, Clarksville, Tyler and Shreveport. The first link of what was to become the Texas and Pacific Railroad was in operation between Marshall and Swanson's Landing on Caddo Lake. By this time Harrison was the third most populous and one of the wealthiest counties in the state.

After the Civil War and Reconstruction, the Texas and Pacific Railroad continued to play an important part in the economic growth of the county. In the 1870's the T&P tracks connected with Shreveport to the east and spanned the county westward.

In the Twentieth Century, Harrison County has developed both an industrial and agricultural economy. Abundant cheap fuel, excellent transpor-

tation facilities, plentiful water and raw materials have brought the county many manufacturing plants, both large and small.

Harrison County is one of the outstanding agricultural centers in the eastern portion of Texas. Farm and livestock production from this area has far-reaching effect on the markets of the nation. Plants from the county's large wholesale nurseries are shipped throughout the country.

With a land area of 570,000 acres, the county has 380,000 acres devoted to agricultural interests. Diversified farming produces important harvests of cotton, corn, seed and feed crops, potatoes, fruits and vegetables.

Beef cattle production has been developed extensively in recent years with predominant breeds including Herefords, Brahman, Aberdeen Angus and Santa Gertrudis. The importance of this growing industry is reflected in the fact that the Texas Polled Hereford Association holds its annual show and sale in Marshall each spring.

The development of the fine dairy herds is another facet of the growing interest in livestock. The dairy industry is well established with a ready market provided by large milk processing plants.

Lumber industries have been important in Harrison County from earliest times because of the fine timber that originally covered the area. These valuable timber stands are not being depleted as they once were, for rapid progress by active agricultural agencies is being achieved to make certain that new trees will grow to supply this important industry in the years ahead. Literally thousands of young pines have been set in the ground and more are being planted each year.

Soil and water conservation practices have improved the agricultural picture in recent times. Great forward strides have been made toward the conscious conservation of wildlife—a great attraction to both Indians and pioneer white man in the early days.

Modern-day leaders of the county seek to preserve the good things of earlier days and to add improvements in the light of new knowledge. By conservation and wise use, the county, with its abundant resources, can shape its future for unlimited prosperity.

MARSHALL

In the turbulent days preceding the Regulator-Moderator War, Commissioners were seeking a location for the county seat of Harrison County. As an inducement Peter Whetstone offered land, including a site for a church, a school and 190 city lots. The offer was accepted and the city was founded in 1839. Isaac Van Zandt, a lawyer and friend of Whetstone, named the new town for Chief Justice John Marshall.

As the Regulator - Moderator conflict spread terror and bloodshed throughout Harrison, Panola and Shelby Counties, Whetstone, like many of the early settlers, was drawn into the fray. He was killed on the courthouse square, on land which he had donated to secure the location of the county seat.

With peace restored by power of the Republic of Texas in 1844, Marshall made great strides in growth and culture. Before 1850 the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian churches were organized. One teacher in a log cabin home established the site of Van Zandt College, later known as Marshall University, although it was a university in name only. This school, the Masonic Female Institute, and other private educational institutions served the educational needs of those times, and so great was Marshall's influence in the frontier wilderness that the young city earned the title of "the Athens of East Texas."

By the time Texas seceded from the union in 1861 Marshall was one of the largest and wealthiest cities of the state. Its industries turned to the production of wartime needs to supply the fighting men of the Confederate armies. Saddles, harness, clothing, powder, and ammunition were produced here to aid the cause of the South.

With the folks of Vicksburg, Marshall became the seat of civil government west of the Mississippi. During the ensuing chaos the city housed the wartime capitol of the state of Missouri and headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi postal department.

Because of the complexity of the population, with new settlers from the north and east, Reconstruction brought many problems. A citizens' party, composed in part of Texas and Pacific Railroad officials from the north, assisted in the restoration of order.

Then the railroad shops were moved to Marshall from Hallsville in 1873. Marshall has enjoyed an industrial payroll which has increased through the years. In addition to the railroad and related industries the city today has a variety of manufacturing plants, oil and gas and mining industries to provide one of the state's largest payrolls for any city of comparable size.

Marshall has long served as the marketing hub of the Northeast Texas area. In addition to the Railroads, two major highways, as well as bus, air and trucking traffic move passengers and freight to every point of the compass. The city's trade territory comprises 10 Texas counties with a total population in excess of 246,500. The annual effective buying power of this 10-county area exceeds $289,728,000.

A fine system of public and parochial schools for both white and Negro children, East Texas Baptist College, Wiley and Bishop colleges serve the educational needs of a growing population.

Marshall has many excellent churches, wide-awake civic clubs and a chamber of commerce working constantly for a bigger and better city. Blessed with an abundance of natural resources, Marshall is confident that the future will increase the tempo of industrialization and bring greater progress and prosperity to enrich the lives of all its citizens.

ELYSIAN FIELDS

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In Greek mythology the Elysian Fields was a land of song and sunlight where the air was always sweet and cool. The good souls who inhabited this paradise lived in simple joy among the flowers and meadows.

When Major Edward Smith ventured into southeastern Harrison County in 1832, he discovered a place which he described in such glowing terms that a listener likened it to the Elysian Fields. In this way a new name came to the area which had, prior to 1830, been an Indian village known as Biff Springs.

A flourishing community at the time Texas came into the Union, Elysian Fields had enough manpower by 1845 to send one company with General Winfield Scott into the war against Mexico.

The Golden Rule Presbyterian Church was founded in 1850, and a Methodist Church, called Bethel, located about five miles west of the town, was the site of the Bethel Camp meeting for over half a century. Both churches still serve the residents of the area where descendants of Major Edward Smith live today.

The site of a Confederate quartermaster camp during the Civil War, Elysian Fields fought in this conflict and, following the defeat, suffered years of hardship, imposed upon the Confederate states. Recovery eventually returned and "King Cotton" brought renewed prosperity.

In 1910 the Marshall and East Texas Railroad, with a northwestern terminus at Winnsboro, brought rail service to Elysian Fields. Cotton moved from the town's three gins over this railroad to the markets of the world. By 1940 when short-line railroads were being crowded out of the economic picture all over the country, the Marshall and East Texas ceased operations. Motor transportation today performs the services formerly provided by the railroad.

"King" no longer, cotton has been displaced by a more diversified economy. Out-growing the one-crop economy of the past, Elysian Fields today is surrounded by oil and gas developments. Fields once white with cotton have been turned into pasture where fine cattle graze and produce more profit than any field crop. Enough cotton is still produced to keep one gin in operation. Lumber and pulp wood help round out the economy.

Elysian Fields is proud of its schools and churches, its bank with continuous service since 1913, and its abundant natural resources—making it today, more than ever before, a land of song and sunlight.

HALLSVILLE

Over a period of 120 years Hallsville has seen East Texas transformed from Indian territory into a rich area of diversified industry. The town originated as a fort, built by W. C. Crawford for protection against the Indians in 1839. By 1849 Fort Crawford, as it was called then, had a post office and a two story building which served as a church, Masonic hall and school—the only school in western Harrison County until 1868.

Eager for progress and contact with the outside world, the settlers at Fort Crawford welcomed the Texas and Pacific railroad, stretching westward in 1870 and passing one mile north of the fort. They moved closer to the railroad and named the new settlement for Elijah Hall, a pioneer of the section. Today a cemetery is all that remains to mark the location of the old fort.

Incorporated in 1935, Hallsville is a progressive town offering all the conveniences of a large city. It has good water and sewer systems, new and modern telephone service, electricity and gas. Streets in the town are well paved.

Served by the Texas and Pacific Railroad and the four-lane U. S. Highway 80, Hallsville looks forward to even greater transportation facilities when the proposed U. S. Super Highway 20 is completed with entrance and exit lanes just two miles south of the town.

The Hallsville Independent School District maintains high standards of education and athletics. It has a modern high school and other buildings just completed to serve approximately 1200 students.

In contrast to the days when the town served as an outpost in Indian territory, Hallsville today is in the "big middle" of East Texas' natural resources and industrial development. Equidistant from Marshall and Longview, the residents of Hallsville have fast access to either city. Higher education is within easy reach at East Texas Baptist College, 10 miles to the east, and Kilgore College, 22 miles west.

Offering suburban living at its finest, Hallsville has two new subdivisions now in the process of development. Low taxes, a friendly atmosphere, five churches to serve as many denominations, and a spirit of cooperation among the citizens make Hallsville a pleasant place to live.

We expect a great future for this neighbor of ours whose people are constantly proving that they know how to make the most of being in the "big middle" of East Texas' abundance!

HARLETON

Harleton, in northwestern Harrison County was founded in 1891 and named for J. W. Harle, a sawmill operator who built a tram railroad from Marshall to move timber from his mill. Although the name Harle is no longer found among the citizens of the town, sawmills remain as one of the factors contributing to the economy of the area.

Located in the midst of the Whelan gas fields, Harleton has been an important petroleum center since 1946. It is the site of two oil blending plants, one owned by the Whalen interests, and the other by the Hunt Oil Company of Dallas.

Cattle, truck farming and peach orchards also contribute to the prosperity of the area.

Harleton is a growing community with fine schools, active churches, a woman's club and a 4H youth program. The town recently voted to become an independent school district to provide more adequately for the educational needs of its children. The school district has a tax of $1.50 with a bonded indebtedness of $98,000. A re-evaluation of all property in the school district is now in progress.

Near Harleton is the home of Federal Judge T. Whitfield Davidson and the beautiful Josephine Davidson Memorial Chapel, dedicated to his mother.

The citizens, keenly interested in government, take much pride in the large turnout at the polls for local and other elections.

Always forward-looking and optimistic, the people of Harleton see the new Lake o' the Pines as an attraction that will contribute immeasurably to the prosperity of the community. Closer to Harleton than any other town, the lake offers excellent fishing and other water sports.

Many good things have come to Harleton since the sawmill of 1891. The Lake o' the Pines is only the latest. The people of the town are confident that the future will bring many more.

JONESVILLE

Railroads have played an important part in the history of Jonesville residents down through the years. The community has twice moved its location to be adjacent to the convenient facilities offered by the presence of a railroad, once moved down the tracks slightly to take advantage of a dual highway and railroad situation.

Located in the eastern section of Harrison County on the old Shreveport road, Jonesville is still taking advantage of the railroad facilities offered by the Texas and Pacific railroad.

The town gained its name from the original trading post operator in the area, William Jones. The town has long since lost the original store, but still supports one of the few country general merchandise stores in the area.

Jonesville residents made their first move in 1868 when the settlement was moved a mile and a half from its original location to be near the Southern Pacific railroad, which ran from Swanson's Landing to Marshall. In 1874 they once again sought a more convenient location and moved to their present site to be near the facilities provided by the Texas and Pacific railroad. When the old Shreveport road became a reality the town shifted slightly down the tracks to take advantage of the dual transportation conveniences offered by railroad tracks and highway.

A mile north of Jonesville at the older settlement of Concord, the first Masonic Lodge in the eastern section of Harrison County was chartered.

Jonesville is still located in the heart of the principal cotton growing section of the county. The T. C. Lindsey Company in Jonesville has one of the finest, most complete cotton gins in this area, only last year adding a new cotton cleaner unit to its modern facilities. The modern operation produces a much improved cotton sample over past methods.

Oil and gas now play an important role in the economy of the Jonesville area, with producing oil and gas wells surrounding the community. The Scottsville oil and gas field is just to the west, and the Jonesville producers are mostly a part of the massive Waskom field. Both LeCuno Oil Corporation and the Waskom Natural Gas Company have their processing plants in the vicinity.

KARNACK

The town was named Karnack because its distance from Port Caddo, the northeast port of entry for the Republic of Texas, was the same as the distance separating Karnack and Thebes in ancient Egypt.

Located in northeastern Harrison County on the Louisiana and Arkansas railroad, Karnack is adjacent to Caddo State Park and the great water sports area. Progressive business firms serve the needs of the local inhabitants as well as the many visitors to Caddo Lake.

In 1941 the Longhorn Ordnance Works was located at Karnack, the pump house of the plant being erected on the site of the old port.

Although its name stems from the distant past, Karnack's people have had a hand in shaping the future in the development of solid fuels for rockets at Thiokol Chemical Corporation, contract operator of Longhorn.

Karnack is a growing community with fine schools, recently expanded to accomodate increasing enrollment. The Karnack Independent School District, with a $1.00 tax rate, is free of bonded indebtedness. Having no outstanding bills, it is operating on a cash basis.

Karnack is proud of its active Lions Club, currently preparing a Caddo Yearbook to provide information about all points of interest on the lake. The town is proud of the harmonious spirit of cooperation among its citizens who always decide issues for the common good in a calm, peaceful manner.

The home of Ladybird Johnson, wife of U. S. Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, Karnack takes a keen interest in national affairs, keeping abreast of trends in politics and government that might affect the local economy.

We salute Karnack, the town with a name as old as the Egyptian pyramids . . . and with an outlook and optimism as modern as the nation's latest satellite!

LEIGH

Colorful, historical Leigh, Texas, is located in the northeastern section of Harrison County on the Louisiana and Arkansas railroad. Originally the community was named Blocker, but was renamed in 1901 for Mrs. Leigh Furrh.

The Leigh location is said to have been the home of a large Indian tribe in early times, and is probably best known for historic, stately Mimosa Hall, located nearby.

Seventeen years before the beginning of the Civil War, in 1844, John J. Webster completed work on Mimosa Hall. The home has been completely restored and modernized in recent years, and is now occupied by descendants of the original builder, the D. V. Blocker family.

Mimosa Hall was named for a large grove of mimosa trees on the grounds, but today one of the main features are the giant magnolia trees which were planted at about the time construction of the house began.

The bricks for the house were handmade by slaves. Interior walls are of brick and are plastered today much as was the original finish. Hog bristles, used as a binder in the plaster, can be seen in the original plaster. Nails used in the construction of the house were of the type sometimes called "square," and were probably imported from Germany; since nails were not then made in the United States. The thick subflooring beams were cut on the premises, and some of the attic joists still have the bark on them.

Located a short distance from the main house was the kitchen. It had a large open fireplace downstairs and living quarters above for the cook and her maids. The building was of brick, as were all of the slave quarters. A passageway connecting the kitchen and the main house was used to transport food; brought to the dining room in covered dishes.

Two slender Doric columns shaped from cypress trees grace the front of Mimosa Hall, giving it the elegance and stately appearance so reminiscent of the pre-Civil War days.

Restoration of the house was begun in the early 1930's, with additions to the house including an ultra-modern kitchen, den, garage and modernization of much of the interior facilities. Mimosa Hall today is truly a combination of the palatial homes built by the pioneers of this area, and the modern conveniences of gracious country living.

As in earlier days, the countryside of Leigh is still planted with cotton, and cattle are quite plentiful in the fields. The Taylor and Trice mercantile store serves the area residents everything from gas for their autos to food for their tables. The local cotton gin is also operated by Taylor and Trice.

SCOTTSVILLE

Scottsville, four miles from Marshall, in east central Harrison County, is a historic spot rich in rare beauty. Its colorful saga began in 1834 when William Thomas Scott ventured into this no-man's land where the boundary of the United States and Mexico was in dispute.

A dependable supply of water from Rock Springs, and the high ground necessary to avoid swamp fever (malaria) made the location a natural choice for building a home. A log cabin served as a temporary shelter until 1840 when the spacious Scott home was completed.

The clapboards on the house were fashioned of native timber under an old oak tree in the yard. The doors and mantles were made of hand-hewn oak. The blinds and glass window panes were brought from New Orleans by river boat through Caddo Lake to Jefferson.

In this home Colonel Scott and Mary Rose Scott reared nine of their 12 children; three died before reaching adulthood. The Scott estate comprised five large plantations, and the influence of this colorful pioneer extended far beyond his East Texas territory. He served as a member of the last congress of the Republic of Texas and represented Harrison County in the state legislature after Texas was admitted to the union. Beginning with the first session in 1846, he served as representative and senator for eight terms in all between that time and 1862. He was also the first president of the Southern Pacific Railroad, now the Texas and Pacific.

Much of the history of the Civil War, as it affected the people of the area, may be seen in the Scottsville cemetery. At the entry of the park stands an imposing monument of granite dedicated to the Confederate soldiers buried there. An oriental pagoda constructed of stone and cement, with a red tile roof, stands over the springs.

Although the vast land holdings of the original Scott plantations are no longer intact, the Scott mansion is very nearly the same today as it was a hundred years ago. Only a few necessary improvements have been added. It has been several years, however, since any descendant of William Thomas Scott and Mary Rose Scott has lived in the ancestral home. The house is occupied, but the descendants of the family prefer to make their homes elsewhere.

Modern Scottsville is known chiefly as a nursery center. The Verhalen and Hope nurseries propagate plants to be sold throughout a great area of the country. Fine cattle, of the Santa Gertrudis and Angus breeds, are also raised on the land once a part of the extensive Scott acreage.

Scottsville is an industrious and prosperous town, a quiet place of fine homes and peaceful living. Its people are progressive and forward-looking, and at the same time, rightfully proud of their community's dramatic past.

WASKOM

Waskom has never believed in waiting for progress. From the earliest times its industrious people have worked to make the town grow and prosper. A constant reminder of this fact is its name, given in honor of the man most instrumental in bringing in the Southern Pacific Railroad. Called Waskom Station in 1872, the town shortened its name to Waskom in 1881.

The railroad, reaching out to far-flung markets, opened a prosperous era of cotton production and a flourishing lumber industry.

It is recalled that in the year 1900 the town had three stores, a one-room school and about a dozen families. In those days, because the economy was based primarily on agriculture, there was money in the fall after the crops were gathered: the rest of the year it was scarce.

A change was in the making when the Waskom gas field was discovered in 1924. Even though this is one of the older gas fields in Texas, it reached its full development after World War II. Gas processing plants and related industries, with their substantial payrolls, contribute a large share to the area's prosperous economy.

Another great impetus to Waskom's industrial growth came when Fabricated Steel Products, Inc. purchased the former Caddo Machine Works, Inc. on a 70-acre plot near the Louisiana-Texas border in 1953. This company brought new employment and a greater payroll, adding to the prosperity of the town.

Acme Brick Company, one of the nation's oldest and largest manufacturers of clay products, is another major industrial establishment. Its products, from plants in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Kansas are shipped to all parts of the nation.

With oil and gas development and industrialization came a decline in agricultural production. Acreage formerly used for farm crops has been converted to pasture as cattle-raising constantly increases in importance.

An interesting feature of Waskom's economy is the large number of service stations, once mentioned in Ripley's Believe It or Not. Representing most of the major oil companies operating in this area, these stations attract many customers from Louisiana due to the fact that Texas' tax on gasoline has consistently remained lower than that of our neighboring state. East-bound motorists find Waskom a good place to stop for a last-chance fill-up where the gasoline tax is comparatively low.

Now served by the Texas and Pacific and the Louisiana and Arkansas Railroads, Waskom offers excellent transportation facilities. Highway 80 runs through the center of town, and the proposed Super Highway of the future is expected to pass only a mile or so to the south.

A fine new high school building and a school system of which the town is proud stand in sharp contrast to the one-room school house of 1900. Active churches, civic clubs and modern city conveniences make Waskom a good place to live. As its abundant resources are developed further, more and more families will make their home in Waskom, gateway to Texas—and a famous last-chance stop for travelers heading east!

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